

Holford Parish Council - Chairman's Report Sept 6th 2021

It has been difficult eighteen months which has made it a challenge to move projects forward.

Community Engagement Fund

The government is offering grants to enable local organisations to organise projects to encourage all local people to get together after long periods of isolation for some. Holford Village Hall committee has submitted a proposal. The Parish Council is in favour of this project in principle and will be discuss this under item 13 requests via email.

We have a new Community Safety Officer – Nicola Hale. She will come along to our November meeting to discuss her role. The role is in place to be a point of contact for the community, to deal with any concerns they may have. She is working closely with the Police, EDF and other agencies to provide support to the local communities.

We have an application to join the Parish Council which will be good news as we will finally be up to a full team of seven.

Environment

The 'wilding' of the grass verges on the A39 is an ongoing project. An update will be given under item 11 on the agenda.

I am pleased to say the rookery in the Silk Mills area appears to slowly becoming re-established, at least there has been a visible migration of birds across Winsors' Meadow, hopefully in time it will recover.

The potholes along the access road to Alfoxton have been filled which is a rare occurrence as the council generally will only repair up to the standard required for a bridleway and have declined to do any maintenance for some years. Persistent requests seem to have paid off!

Quantock Common SAC Woodlands are about to make improvements to the woodlands mostly to remove the Rhododendrons and hollies that are becoming invasive. A map of the proposed areas for treatment will be posted on the Parish Council website.

There have been reports of noise nuisance in the village late at night. The Chairman has asked questions of SWT planning about the use of domestic premises for business use. This will be raised at item 11 by Councillor Crossley.

Traffic and Transport

The project known as Bus Back Better from Somerset Bus Partnership is holding Zoom meetings on Sept 14th and 16th for councillors. Hopefully we will be able to give an update on progress to date at our next meeting.

The Parish Council's Traffic Team (Emma Cavendish, Mike Copleston and Stephen Campbell) continues to investigate ways to reduce speeding on the A39. The new signage that has been agreed by SCC Traffic Management has yet to appear although

some renewal of the white lines and arrows seems to have been done. Councillor Copleston has been investigating the protocol for applying for a grant for two Speed Indicator Devices (SIDS) and will report on progress to date under item 11. I have heard from Katherine Tyson of Traffic Management that there is also a possible grant from police sources - Police Road Safety Trust fund.

A questionnaire has been designed to be distributed to all Parishioners to assess whether they have concerns regarding traffic in their area. This will be discussed under item 11.

EDF Hinkley C

The Community bus service is now back. The shields around passengers are removed only the driver's will remain. Masks must be worn. Timetables are published and a copy is available at the A39 bus stop in Holford.

EDF are shortly opening a new visitor centre for the public at Cannington Court and they have invited any member of the Parish Council to go along and see the new centre prior to the official opening.

Full details of all HPC endeavours and minutes are now posted on the village website so that Parishioners can follow progress. Thanks to Councillors Plomgren and Talling for making these available.

Local Government Reorganisation

This is progressing slowly. The Parish Council is continuing dialog with Kilve and Nether Stowey Parish Councils on ways we can share information and there are plans to discuss possible areas of co-operation. As yet we have not been informed of the kind of services the PC might be asked to adopt. Indeed the PC may not want to adopt any, it is not compulsory. It would, however, give local people more of a say in how things are carried out. This is obviously not a practical option unless such responsibilities are accompanied by a cash injection. The current volunteers are unlikely to want to take on considerable extra duties without some kind of financial assistance.

Defibrillator – replacement parts are proving difficult to obtain for the usual reasons. Hopefully this will improve soon. Councillor Crossley will update under item 10.

On a lighter note, the Chairman has been contacted by the BBC who want to do a piece on the 30th anniversary of the filming of the Bryan Adams video in Silk Mills. If anyone can remember personal details of the event please let me know and I will pass on your contact details. Thanks to Sue Ayshford who does remember!

Emma Cavendish
Chairman